- Launching of Road Shows in key source markets of Europe;
- Focusing on growth of hotel infrastructure particularly budget hotels; and
- Enhancing connectivity through augmentation of air capacity and improving road infrastructure to major tourist attractions.

Packages offered by tour operators

4315. SHRI RAJKUMAR DHOOT: Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that attractive packages offered by various foreign airlines and tour operators are likely to witness an increase in the number of Indians travelling abroad;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) its impact on domestic tourism in India; and

(d) the steps being taken to attract more and more domestic tourists to different destinations in India?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF TOURISM (SHRIMATI RENUKA CHOWDHURY): (a) to (c) Promotions and packages offered by foreign airlines and tour operators have resulted in increase in outbound traffic, but its impact on domestic tourism is minimal. In 2003 the outbound traffic was 5.35 million as compared to 309 million domestic tourist visits. As per provisional estimates, domestic tourist visits has further increased by approximately 20% in 2004 while outbound traffic has increased by 16%.

(d) The steps being taken to attract more domestic tourists are development of infrastructure, advertising, participation in trade-shows, dissemination of information through print media, brochures and CD ROMs, joint promotions with State Governments/Union Territories etc.

Desalination of sea water to produce potable drinking water

4316. SHRI RAJU PARMAR: Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government are considering seriously to develop a cost effective technology to desalinate sea water to produce potable drinking water;